

A Letter to Russia . . .

SIMPLICITY AND TRUTH

(First of a Series)

Dear Ivan:
It is said that you and I, and all the other millions upon millions of people in this world of ours are living in unusual times.

For instance, a newspaper said the other day: "In times are unique. Never before has a handful of human beings had the ability to issue commands which would annihilate civilization."

"Today a few men have that power. Tomorrow, the command could be given. How long a shadow is cast across American society by this stark, unprecedented fact of modern history? That shadow is not easily traced, measured or weighed, but it is here."

No doubt, Ivan, that same shadow of fear of an atomic holocaust exists in your country, too. Those words are a symptom of the fear and doubt of our times, and there is where the deadliest danger lies for you and for me.

Some other words of fear and doubt were spoken by a man named John Maxwell, who said: "Life is a damned, stinking, treacherous game and 999 out of 1000 men are no good."

Also speaking of our unusual times, an atomic scientist said: "We have so largely lost our ability to talk with one another. . . . We hunger for nobility: the rare words and acts that harmonize simplicity and truth."

There is absolutely no doubt, Ivan, that communication between people is one of the most difficult of the human arts, especially between your people and mine.

It seems from the volume of printed and spoken words swirling about us, that we definitely have not lost our ability to talk to one another.

However, it might be valid for each of us to ask if we have lost the ability to listen, and to find the nobility that lies in simplicity and truth.

The comments above are American, because ours is a society of individuals, and all may talk freely about what we please.

Although yours is a society of the state, Ivan, yet each of you in Russia is an individual—and possesses thoughts of his own, even though these thoughts can't be freely expressed.

This series of letters is to you as an individual, Ivan, and will be dedicated to listening and seeking the nobility of simplicity and truth which is all about us in our free America during these "unique" times.

Your rulers will oppose and try to stop these letters, Ivan, but we hope they get through—somehow—to you.

Fog Perils Walkers, Too

The hazards of fog driving are harshly demonstrated in widely-publicized accidents involving large numbers of vehicles—but pedestrians also can learn from these incidents, according to the California Highway Patrol.

Reduced visibility is one of the pedestrian's greatest enemies, not only because the pedestrian has more difficulty seeing the vehicle, but because the driver has greater difficulty seeing the pedestrian. Fog compounds the usual winter hazards of shorter daylight hours and the fact that many persons wear darker apparel.

Even though the pedestrian has the right of way in a crosswalk, he should not step into the street when a vehicle is approaching until he is certain the driver sees him and can stop.

Always cross at intersections, choosing a lighted one where possible. Never step from between parked cars, from between—

or cross at mid-block. Outside of a crosswalk, vehicles have the right of way. The Highway Patrol pointed out that the driver also has the responsibility to reduce speed and be additionally cautious any time visibility is lowered by darkness or weather conditions.

SLOGAN
"More Will Live the More You Give" is the slogan of the 1963 Heart Fund drive of the Los Angeles County Heart Assn.

Yea, there is nothing really for you to fear about the United States. You must understand that the people of Russia need not fear we Americans, because it is a simple truth that, in all of human history, free men have never attacked, they only defend their precious freedoms. It is your own rulers—not we

Americans—who peril the peace of the world. In the simplicity of truth, since time began, Ivan, there have been men haunted by fear and doubt, like John Maxwell. Since time began, there have been peoples obsessed with shadow. History pauses to pity both the man and the people, and then forgets because there is so very little to remember. Is that to be the fate of your generation and mine? Surely, it does not need to be, because our generation has so much to offer to history, and to humanity, and to the freedom of all men. It is a simple truth that the fate of our generation depends upon how we face the shadow of fear that is upon us.

The tragedy of such men as John Maxwell in your country and in mine is that they die without discovering that when a man is filled with doubt and fear, it is only himself that he doubts and fears. In the same way, when people are obsessed with shadow, it is they alone who cast that shadow. The doubts and fears of a man,

the shadow that obsesses a people, are rooted ever so deeply in the age-old unconscious dread to leave the known of today to face the unknown of tomorrow. Human history teaches us the simplicity of the truth that the past always doubts the future, but that the future always is far better than the past fears it will be. So you can see there is nothing really for you to fear. And it is a simple truth that when you seek and find light, a shadow goes away. So, Ivan, let me seek and show you the light of freedom that brightly shines in the United States of America, and some day can light the minds of you in Russia. Your friend, TOM TORRANCE (Next week: The Shadow)

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